

12 --The present invention also provides a method for improving detection sensitivity of a target component for use in a low flow velocity gradient high performance liquid chromatographic apparatus, wherein a diffusion promoting device is provided just before a separation column.--

Please replace the paragraph bridging pages 12-13 of the specification with the following rewritten paragraph:

13 --Fig. 1 shows an example using the linear union in which the inner diameter of a part (3) of the solvent inlet tube (1) and outlet tube (2) is larger than the other portion, and Fig. 2 shows an example in which a frit (4) is inserted into the part (3) having a larger inner diameter than the other portion in the diffusion promoting device.--

IN THE CLAIMS:

Cancel claims 3, 4, and 14, without prejudice.

Amend claims 1, 2, 5, and 8-13, so that the claims herein read:

1. (amended) A diffusion promoting device provided just before a separation column and having a function for improving detection sensitivity, wherein said device comprises a solvent inlet tube and a solvent outlet tube and wherein said device includes at least one feature selected from the group consisting of (i) having a solvent inlet tube and a solvent outlet tube with different inner diameters, (ii) having a solvent outlet tube connected to a solvent inlet tube at an acute angle, a right angle, or an obtuse angle, and (iii) having a solvent outlet tube connected to a solvent inlet tube by a connecting part having a diameter that is larger than the diameters of the diameters of the solvent inlet and outlet tubes.